

Commissioner Deborah A. Gist's Weekly Field Memo
Friday, July 6, 2012

Notes from Commissioner Gist:

1. [RI Diploma Requirements](#)
2. Regulatory Requirements of the [Education System Standards](#)

From the R.I. Department of Education (RIDE):

3. [Induction Updates](#)
4. [Interim Assessments](#)
5. [Release of School Classifications](#)

Attachments to this field memo:

1. Educator Evaluation System Implementation Requirements - Memo and Chart;
2. 2 page overview of the new measurement and classification system, and a PowerPoint that summarizes the basics of the new measurement, classification, and intervention system

Action Item Calendar

- July 13: [Physical-restraint](#) reports due
July 15: Schools and districts submit [final personnel assignments](#)
July 15: Deadline for final reporting of [evaluation ratings](#)
July 15: Deadline for submitting [school-construction forms](#)
July 18: Student enrollment, attendance, discipline files due (see below)
July 27: Deadline for reporting [final evaluation ratings](#)
July 30: Submission, Absence, ADA, ADM, Suspension, Truancy reports due (see below)
-

Notes from Commissioner Gist:

1. RI Diploma Requirements

As you are aware, the RI Diploma Requirements go into effect with the graduating class of 2014. A recent news story on Channel 10 focused on the implications of the Diploma System for students with disabilities and has created both confusion and spread misinformation. To aid in your communication with parents and families, here are the main points of the Diploma System and its impact on students with disabilities:

The changes in the graduation requirements will not prevent all students with special needs from earning a traditional high school diploma. The new graduation requirements are designed to help Rhode Island students, including those with special educational needs, become diploma-ready.

1% of Rhode Island students participate in the alternate assessment and these 100 students will not be eligible to earn a traditional high school diploma. This emphasizes the importance of the determination discussion for alternate assessment at IEP meetings. Parents need to participate in this decision and be informed that alternate assessment participation is reviewed annually as part of the IEP. The students who participate in the alternate assessment have the opportunity stay in school until they are 21 years old and earn credentials designed to help transition successfully into adulthood. These new credentials are:

- Co-developed by RIDE along with public agencies serving adults with disabilities, labor and training, parents and parent organizations, special education administrators and teachers of students who participate in the RIAA;
- Aligned to transition curriculum currently in use throughout Rhode Island schools;
- Identify the skills our youth will need in transition to the adult service system and providing parents with important information for IEP and transition planning; and
- Connected to transcripts that will help families, students, and those serving them know what knowledge and skills these students have attained.

The credential options for RIAA students are being piloted in three districts this fall, however this is a conversation you will want to begin with your special education director and building administrators now. Getting important details into the hands of teachers and administrators as they meet with parents will be important. For more information, please visit:

http://www.ride.ri.gov/OMP/Secondary/sec_regs.aspx#Secondary_Regulation_Guidance.

For children with disabilities who are not in that 1% and therefore are able to work toward a diploma, there are many accommodations and supports available to ensure they get there successfully. You can find more information here: <http://www.ride.ri.gov/OMP/default.aspx#Secondary>.

Finally, the graduation ceremony is an important moment in the lives of all students and families. All students that have earned a diploma and/or another credential should be able to participate in graduation ceremonies and have their accomplishments celebrated by their peers, family and teachers.

2. Regulatory Requirements of the Education System Standards (see attached)

The attached documents provide clarification of certain regulatory requirements of the Education System Standards as all LEA's prepare for full implementation of educator evaluation systems in the 2012-2013 school year.

From RIDE:

3. Induction Update

Please see the following announcement from our Office of Educator Quality and Certification:

We are in the process of identifying beginning teachers for the 2012-2013 school year. A few weeks ago we met with district Human Resource staff members to explain the process for identifying beginning teachers as well as providing updates on the way our data entry has been streamlined. It is critical that we have the names of beginning teachers as soon as they are available in order to pair them up with an Induction Coach to provide support at or before the beginning of the school year. It is also important to be sure to enter any beginning teachers who were hired past the October 31, 2011 deadline last year to support them this year. Please have your designated staff members enter the beginning teacher information at <https://sites.google.com/site/riinduction/>.

To improve our communication process, this year our beginning teacher identification process allows each district to enter a confirmation email address for district updates.

Thank you for your continued support. As always, if you have any questions or feedback, do not hesitate to contact Hilda or Donna:

Hilda Potrzeba at hilda.potrzeba@ride.ri.gov or 401-222-8891

Donna Okrasinski at donna.okrasinski@ride.ri.gov or 401-222-8982

Please see the following announcement from our Office of Instruction, Assessment, & Curriculum:

4. RIDE to Recruit Educators in math and ELA for Interim Assessments Item Review Committee

Through the Race to the Top Initiative, the Office of Instruction, Assessment and Curriculum is developing Interim Assessments in ELA and Mathematics for grades 3-11. As part of the development process classroom teachers and other educators are invited to participate in the Interim Assessments item review process as part of an Item Review Committee (IRC). During this process IRC members will review assessment items developed to align with the Common Core State Standards in either math or ELA.

The IRC members will review the assessment items using an online system and will be assigned to review one grade level. Stipends are provided based on the number of items to be reviewed. The stipend for math educators is \$150 and for ELA educators is \$225. For more information view the IRC application at: www.ride.ri.gov/Assessment/Interim.aspx.

If you have any questions about the upcoming IRC opportunity, please contact Jessica by email (Jessica.Brown@RIDE.RI.GOV) or phone (222-8253).

5. Release of School Classifications

Please see the following announcement from our Office of Accelerating School Performance:

On Friday, July 13, RIDE will be releasing school classifications. The new classification system -- a change provided by our ESEA waiver -- includes six levels of school classification. You all received your district data, school classifications, and school report cards on June 12 for verification. On July 13, RIDE will issue a press release and publish the classifications, AMO reports, and school report cards. To assist you and your building administrators in communicating about both the new measurement system and classifications, attached please find a:

- 2 page overview of the new measurement and classification system, and
- a PowerPoint that summarizes the basics of the new measurement, classification, and intervention system.

Early next week, we will pass on similar information to building administrators. If you have any questions about the new system or your district or school's performance within it, please contact Lauren.McCarthy@ride.ri.gov.

RIDE will post this field memo on Tuesday, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Commissioner/fieldmemos/default.aspx>